

21 March, 2001

RAJYA SABHA

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Wednesday, the 21st March, 2001/30, Phalguna, 1922 (Saka)

The House met at eleven of the clock,

MR. CHAIRMAN in the Chair.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Question No. 361, Shri Narendra Mohan.
(*Interruptions*)

SHRI NARENDRA MOHAN: Question No. 361. (*Interruptions*)

ORAL ANSWERS TO STARRED QUESTIONS

Expert Group for Quick Rescue Operations

*361. SHRI NARENDRA MOHAN: Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) whether government have framed any guidelines for setting up an Expert group for undertaking quick rescue operations, exploiting the mines beyond a certain wall, guarding all-weather river lining, etc. in view of the major accidents happening in coal mines during the last so many years and reports of subsequent enquiry commissions;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) whether such measures have resulted in minimizing such accidents and mitigating the hardships of the coal miners and their families?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRI SYED SHAHNAWAZ HUSSAIN): (a) to (c) A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) to (c) In 1983, The Government of India in accordance with the recommendations made by the third conference on safety in mines, decided to vest the responsibility for the rescue and recovery work on the mines management. Thereafter the rescue stations of the erst-while Central Coal Mines Rescue Stations Committee were

handed over by the Ministry of Labour to the Ministry of Coal and these were in turn transferred to the managements of the Coal Companies.

The taken over rescue stations of the erstwhile CCMRSC needed large scale revamping and a large number of rescue stations and rescue rooms were required to be set up to provide necessary rescue services to the operating underground coal mines in compliance of the Mines Rules, 1985. With this objective in view Coal India Limited constituted an expert Committee to suggest a comprehensive plan for modernisation of the rescue services. Based on the recommendations of this Committee detailed project reports for modernisation of rescue stations and construction of new ones were drawn up for implementation. Compliance of statutory requirement of having rescue stations (RS)/Rescue Rooms (RR) within 35 KM of each operating under ground mine was kept in view while deciding sites of these rescue stations.

The Government of India constituted a Committee under the Chairmanship of Shri V.S. Dubey, the then Joint Secretary, Ministry of Coal, vide O.M. No. 51013/6/85/CSW/LSW dated 25-4-88 for upgradation of rescue stations.

This Committee approved the locations of different rescue stations/RRs in different subsidiaries and also recommended the broad type of main rescue equipment to be provided in RS/RRs. Subsequently, the Standing Committee on Safety in Coal Mines recommended the establishment of rescue stations/rescue rooms in such a manner in different subsidiary companies that emergent help from these rescue establishments are promptly available within half an hour should an emergent situation arise in any underground mine.

Since then the rescue services have been expended and modernised by and large. As on date 6 Rescue Stations, 14 Rescue-Rooms-With-refresher-Training-Facilities and 18 Rescue Rooms are being maintained by Coal India Limited. Modern rescue equipment has been provided and rescue personnel trained in their use. Modernised training facilities have been provided for training of rescue personnel under simulated conditions.

Directorate General of Mines Safety under Ministry of Labour is empowered to grant permission for workings of the mines and is the implementing authority of the safety statutes as laid down in the Mine Act, 1952. Coal Mines Regulations, 1957 and the Rules made there under.

The Coal Mines Regulations contain provisions for leaving adequate barriers between mines. The DGMS circulars give guidelines for providing guards on the vicinity of embankments against rivers during Monsoons.

All efforts are taken to avoid accidents in coal mines and safety in coal mines is under close scrutiny of numerous bodies. As a result of the continuous efforts on the safety front since nationalisation the number of fatal accidents has reduced from 177 with 233 fatalities in 1975, the year of nationalisation, to 79 accidents with 99 fatalities in 2000. The fatality rate per M.Te. of coal production has been reduced from 2.66 to 0.37. All possible efforts shall continue to be taken in the coal mines of CIL towards a state of Zero Accident Potential.

श्री सुरेश पचौरी: सभापति महोदय, आज तो सारे प्रश्नों का उत्तर आडवाणी जी को देना है।
....(व्यवधान)

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO STARRED QUESTIONS

Implementation of Food for Work programme in Rajasthan

*362. PROF. M. SANKARALINGAM: Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have given thought to the report appearing in 'The Hindu' dated 28th February, 2001, wherein Rajasthan Chief Minister has drawn Government's attention to the difficulties being faced in the implementation of Food for Work programme during the on-going drought and relief measures and had suggested that the programme should not be restricted to the Employment Assurance Scheme alone;

(b) if so, what is the reaction of Government;